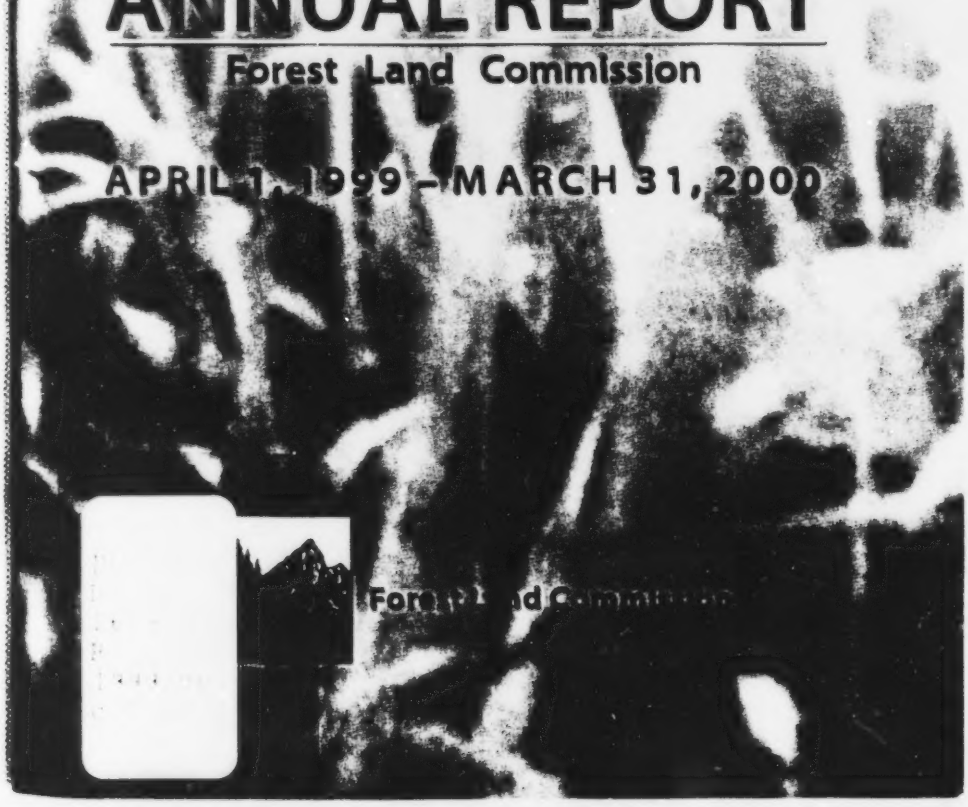
Provincial Agricultural Land Commission

Provincial Agricultural Land Commission

ANNUAL REPORT

Forest Land Commission

APRIL 1, 1999 – MARCH 31, 2000



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BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Honourable Garde B. Gardom
Lieutenant-Governor
Government House
1401 Rockland Avenue
Victoria, British Columbia V8S 1V9

May It Please Your Honour:

Together with my colleague, the Honourable Jim Doyle, Minister of Forests, I am pleased to present the Annual Report and Financial Statement for the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission for the period April 1, 1999 through March 31, 2000.

Respectfully,

Honourable Corky Evans
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

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The Honourable Corky Evans
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Dear Minister:

I am pleased to submit for your consideration this Annual Report and Financial Statement for the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission for the period April 1, 1999 through March 31, 2000.

This year we have combined the annual reports for the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission to reflect the many overlapping goals and activities of the two Commissions.

In 1999–2000 the ALC worked hard to re–evaluate its strategic directions and to consult with farmers, local governments, First Nations and many others. I am pleased that support for the continued preservation of agricultural resources in British Columbia remains high. The input received by the Commission from its many stakeholders during the year was invaluable as we set policy directions and revised our processes to meet new business requirements.

A significant effort was also made in 1999–2000 to prepare for the merger of the ALC and FLC on April 1, 2000. The stage has been set for implementation of new strategic directions and business processes that will protect the working landscape of BC's farms and forests for the future.

Respectfully,

Dr. Alan Chambers, Chair
Provincial Agricultural Land Commission

FOREST LAND COMMISSION

The Honourable Jim Doyle
Minister of Forests
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 1X4

Dear Minister:

I am pleased to submit for your consideration this Annual Report and Financial Statement for the Forest Land Commission and Provincial Agricultural Land Commission for the period April 1, 1999 through March 31, 2000.

This year we have combined the annual reports for the Forest Land Commission and Agricultural Land Commission to reflect the many overlapping goals and activities of the two Commissions.

In 1999–2000 a major focus of the FLC was to prepare for its responsibilities under the *Forest Land Reserve Act* to regulate forest practices on private land within the FLR and on private managed forest land in the ALR. The Private Forest Land Practices Regulation, which will come into effect on April 1, 2000, is the product of the Commission's consultations with Provincial agencies, local governments and the Private Forest Landowners' Association. The regulation will set out a streamlined, results–based approach to managing forest practices.

A significant effort was also made in 1999–2000 to prepare for the merger of the FLC and ALC on April 1, 2000. The stage has been set for implementation of new strategic directions and business processes that will protect the working landscape of BC's farms and forests for the future.

Respectfully,

Dr. Alan Chambers, Chair
Forest Land Commission

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Message from the Chair

Against a rapidly changing backdrop of fluctuating commodity prices, growth pressures, new trading relationships and emerging technologies, it is easy to lose sight of what is really important in the long–run. The choices we make now have real consequences, not only for you and me, but for all generations to come. Will we have a secure source of food? Will British Columbia be poised to take advantage of new markets for agricultural and forest products? Will the British Columbia agricultural and forest industries be able to maintain their market share in the face of increasing global competition? Will a rural lifestyle remain a viable alternative for those who desire it?

For the past 27 years the Agricultural Land Commission has tried to make the choices that will ensure agriculture remains an important part of the provincial economy and landscape. The Forest Land Commission has similarly worked to protect forest lands and encourage forestry since 1994. I am confident that this same resolve and dedication will be carried forward by the new Land Reserve Commission, which will replace the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission on April 1, 2000.

The new Land Reserve Commission will face many challenges. The merging of the two mandates, and the addition of responsibility for regulating forest practices on private land within the Forest Land Reserve and privately managed forest land within the Agricultural Land Reserve, will demand greater knowledge and awareness on the part of Commission members. Supporting the larger, 10–member Commission will require additional staff effort and other resources.

At the same time, these changes provide the opportunity to do business in new ways and to work more closely with local governments, agricultural and forestry producers, First Nations, landowners and other communities of interest. New members will bring to the Commission additional expertise and fresh perspectives. Perhaps most importantly, the "changing of the guard" provides an opportunity to re–evaluate our core values and strategic directions.

Our collective future in agriculture is being discussed right now by the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries. The Select Standing Committee has heard from industry, governments and individuals on a huge variety of issues affecting agriculture, from concerns over genetically modified foods to the value of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

What role will the Land Reserve Commission play in making the new provincial Agri–Food Policy a success? Following over 100 meetings with local government officials and others we released a draft strategic plan, "Farms and Forests for the Future", for broad consultation. Throughout the consultation process, what we heard reinforced our belief that public support for the land reserve system remained high. British Columbians recognized the need for a secure source of food, the value of rural lifestyles and the contribution of agriculture and forestry to a vibrant economy. One of the first tasks facing the Land Reserve Commission will be to implement the strategic directions defined through this consultation process.

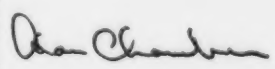
One of the strategic directions for the new Commission will be to forge even closer links with local governments and First Nations, and to increase our accessibility to the public. Having 10 commission members will allow for regional Commission panels for the first time. Each regional panel will be able to spend more time in the field, meeting with local governments and the public. This new way of doing business for the Commission should pay dividends in terms of more responsive decision–making and a more cooperative relationship between the Commission and local governments.

The Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission have already fostered a good relationship with local governments, evidenced by the increasing recognition of agriculture and forestry in community land use plans and bylaws. The Land Reserve Commission will build on this relationship by pursuing a program of delegating authority for subdivision and non–farm use decisions to interested local governments. These local governments will have a greater role in administering land use in the ALR, while ensuring that the integrity of the Reserve is maintained.

Another example of successful partnership is that between the Commission and the Private Forest Landowners' Association. The Association represents many of the private interests affected by the Private Forest Land Practices regulation, including the largest corporate landowners. The PFLA will be instrumental in helping the Commission ensure that the new standards are met, that results are reported fairly and that problems which arise are remedied quickly and effectively.

Much was done in 1999–2000 to lay the groundwork for the new Land Reserve Commission. The new Commission inherits a reputation for reasoned and fair decision–making, strong public support for its work and a dedicated staff of highly motivated professionals.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission for their contributions over the past year, and the staff for their professionalism and hard work. The next year will be an exciting time for all of us.



Dr. Alan Chambers
Chair
Provincial Agricultural Land Commission
and Forest Land Commission

The Agricultural Land Commission

Mission

The Agricultural Land Commission is an independent Provincial agency dedicated to protecting the scarce supply of agricultural land that is important to the current and future needs of British Columbia.

It encourages the establishment and maintenance of farms, to provide a basis for a sustainable economy and a secure source of food. The Agricultural Land Commission also promotes local government bylaws, plans and policies which support agriculture.

Overview

In British Columbia, less than 3% of the land is capable of growing crops. Prior to 1973, an estimated 6,000 hectares of prime agricultural land were being lost to urban growth each year. In response, the subdivision and non–farm use of agricultural land was 'frozen' by the Provincial government in December 1972, and the Land Commission was established in 1973.

The Commission established the Agricultural Land Reserve based on the agricultural potential of the land and a consideration of land use, local plans and bylaws, input from public hearings and local governments and the provision of sufficient land at the time to allow communities five years of urban growth. The ALR is a Provincial land use zone that protects scarce soil resources and provides agriculture a place to conduct business.

Between 1973 and 2000, the Agricultural Land Commission participated in land use planning with local communities and government agencies, and adjudicated applications for the use of land in the Agricultural Land Reserve. The Agricultural Land Commission administered the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Soil Conservation Act.*

In 1999–2000, the Commission handled over 800 applications, land use documents and related inquiries. In all of its decisions and activities, the Commission made every effort to be fair, efficient and comprehensive.

In June, 1999 the Provincial government passed the *Land Reserve Commission Act* to combine the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission. The Land Reserve Commission will replace the Agricultural Land Commission and Forest Land Commission on April 1, 2000.

The Forest Land Commission

Overview

The Forest Land Reserve was established in 1994 to minimize the impact of urban development and rural settlement on BC's commercial forest land base. All land classed as private managed forest land under the *Assessment Act* which was not in the Agricultural Land Reserve, and all private land which was part of a tree farm license, were designated as land in the FLR. Over 95% of the 920,000 hectares of private land in the FLR is located in the Vancouver Island and Kootenay regions, and includes the majority of BC's most productive forest land adjacent to urban centres.

The Forest Land Commission adjudicated applications for the use and subdivision of private managed forest lands, and proposals to add or remove private land from the Forest Land Reserve. The Commission also advised the Minister of Forests on proposals to remove Crown land from the Forest Land Reserve, and reported on the state of these forest lands. In the past year, the Forest Land Commission received over 100 applications, land use documents and related inquiries.

In 1995, the Provincial government added approximately 15 million hectares of Crown land in Provincial Forests to the FLR. These lands were in forest use zones that had been identified in regional land use plans for Vancouver Island, the Cariboo–Chilcotin and the Kootenays. Orders–in–Council were used to define these Crown lands, and the new FLR designations did not include Crown land in parks, ecological reserves or the Agricultural Land Reserve. The designation of these lands for forest use created greater certainty for the forest industry and for local communities. It is anticipated that additional Crown forest land will be added to the FLR as land and resource management plans are completed for the other regions of BC.

Mission

The Forest Land Commission is an independent Provincial agency dedicated to preserving the integrity of a productive forest land base to provide economic, environmental and social benefits to all communities in British Columbia.

The Forest Land Commission is responsible for the Forest Land Reserve, which is an essential part of a Provincial land use strategy to create a sustainable future for British Columbia.

Land Commission Office

During 1999–2000 the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission were supported by the Land Commission Office, a secretariat employing 28 professional and administrative staff. The Land Commission Office is the responsibility of the General Manager of the ALC and Chief Officer of the FLC. After April 1, 2000 the Land Reserve Commission will continue to be supported by the Land Commission Office under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer.

Commission Membership

Commissioners provide a wide range of agricultural, forestry, planning, land use and other experience. Commissioners are appointed by the Lieutenant–Governor for a term of up to four years. The creation of the Land Reserve Commission, effective April 1, 2000, will require the appointment of several former ALC and FLC members to the new Commission, as well as new members.

Chair of the ALC and Chair of the FLC

Dr. Alan Chambers,
Vancouver consultant and former UBC professor in the management of natural resources. *(Appointed Chair of the ALC in December 1998. Appointed Chair of the FLC in February 1994.)*

Agricultural Land Commissioners, 1999–2000

Vice–Chair
Maureen Thompson, Prince George
Elected member of the Regional District of Fraser–Fort George since 1990.

Kurt Alberts, Fort Langley
Community planner with extensive local government experience in rural planning and public participation. *(to December 1999)*

Janna Bakker,
Langley
Professional agrologist and partner in Koch Greenhouses, a leading producer of roses and orchids.

Gus Horn,
100 Mile House
Manager of a Cariboo cattle ranch and past participant in regional Crown land use planning.

David Taylor,
Kelowna
Orchardist and past Chair of the City of Kelowna's agriculture advisory committee.

Forest Land Commissioners, 1999–2000

Patricia Halliday,
Comox
Founder and President of the Comox Residents' Association, and past member of the Comox Municipal Advisory Planning Commission.

Wayne Nowlin,
Cranbrook
Officer on the District Labour Council, and former regional representative to the national IWA board.

In March Jim Plotnikoff, Director of Strategic Planning and Corporate Policy, announced his intention to retire after nearly 27 years of service with the Agricultural Land Commission, the Forest Land Commission and the new Land Reserve Commission.

A graduate of the University of British Columbia with a Bachelor's degree in Geography and a Master's degree in Community Planning, Jim began his career with the then–District of Surrey's Planning Department. After rising to the position of Director of Long Range Planning for Surrey, Jim joined the newly–created Land Commission on September 17, 1973.

A dedicated and hard–working professional, Jim has been instrumental in shaping the land reserve system and promoting agriculture and forestry in British Columbia. Jim's extensive knowledge and commitment to his work will be greatly missed by the members and staff of the Land Reserve Commission and others who have been fortunate enough to work with him over the years. However, we thank him for his dedication and wish him all the best in his retirement.

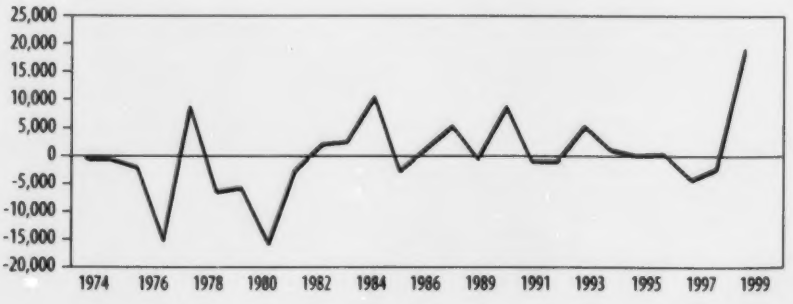
State of the Agricultural Land Reserve

Size and Distribution

As of March 31, 2000 the area of the Agricultural Land Reserve was 4,727,468 hectares. The ALR, however, has evolved over the past 27 years in terms of size, distribution throughout the province and the agricultural capability of lands included in the Reserve.

The ALR was refined over the years through a series of inclusions and exclusions. Generally, lands were excluded that were proven to have limited potential for agriculture or where a net benefit for agriculture could be demonstrated. Similarly, new land was included in the ALR if information indicated that there was good potential for agriculture. Figure 1 shows the net annual changes in the size of the ALR as a result of inclusions and exclusions.

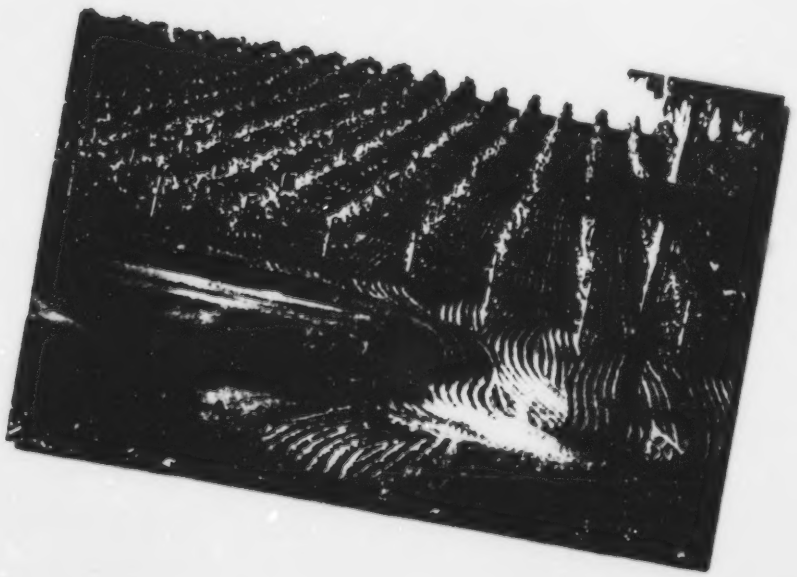
Figure 1: Annual Net Change (ha) in the Area of the ALR.



Over 80% of all land that has been removed from the ALR was excluded prior to 1985. A large portion of this land did not warrant ALR protection, and it was removed as part of a concerted review using new maps and better soil information.

During the second decade of its existence, the size of the ALR slowly increased as the rate of removing land declined and new land continued to be added. The decline in the rate of exclusion over time reflected the growing accommodation of the ALR boundaries in community land use plans. The majority of the land added to the ALR was located in the north and central parts of BC, and was added as new Crown land was brought into agricultural production.

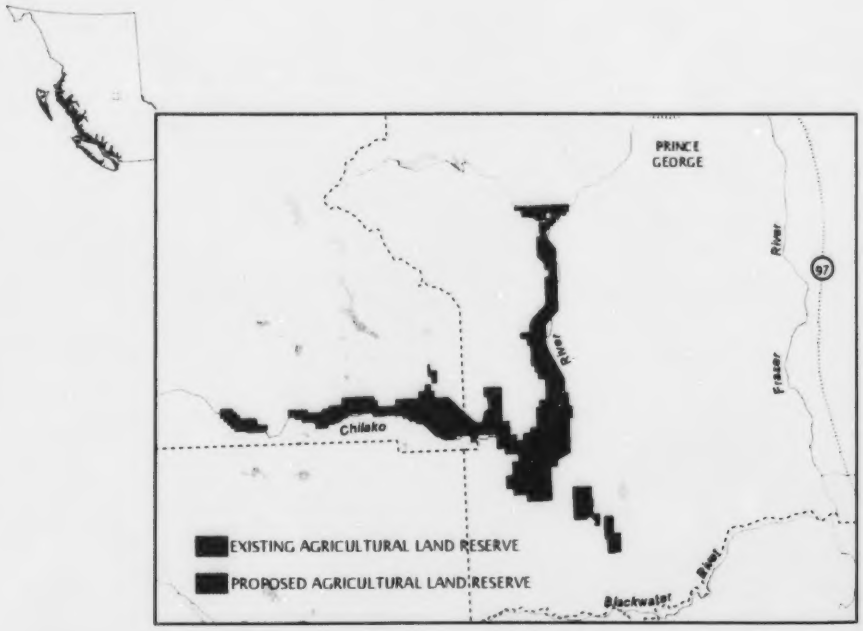
Since 1995 the size of the ALR has remained relatively stable, the notable exception being the inclusion of 19,700 hectares in the Punchaw/ Chilako area southwest of Prince George during this fiscal year. Although this area was actively farmed in 1973, at that time there was insufficient soils and climate information to justify including it in the ALR. As a result of the inclusion of the 19,700 hectares in January, the Agricultural Land Reserve is now slighter larger than when it was established in 1973.



Changes in the Area of the Agricultural Land Reserve (1974 – March 31, 2000):

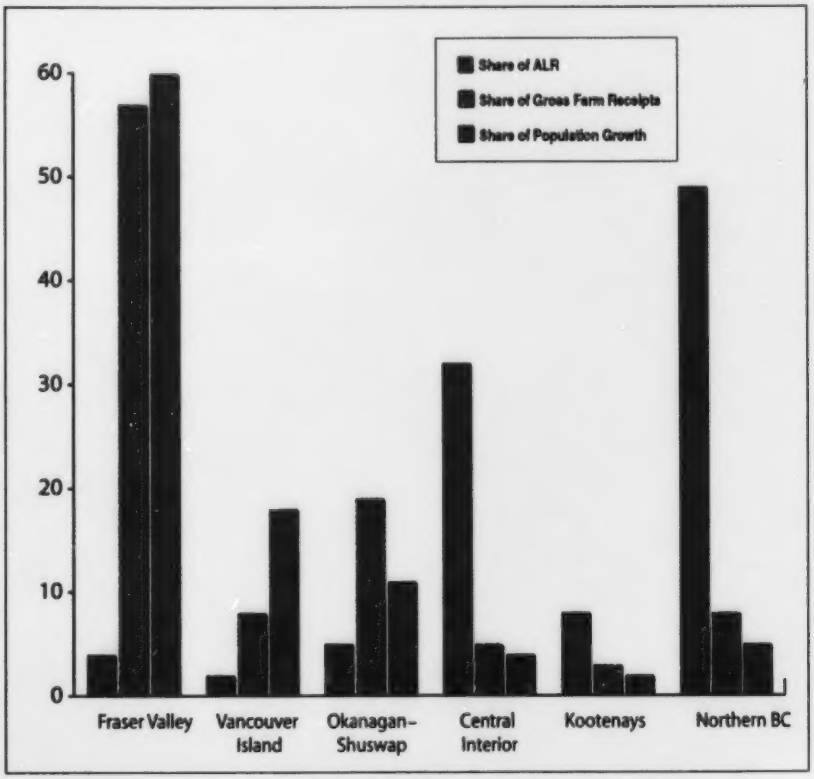
Region	Inclusions (Ha)	Exclusions (Ha)	Net Change (Ha)	% of Original ALR
Vancouver Island	8,041	24,902	–16,861	–13.0
Okanagan–Shuswap	3,028	28,999	–25,971	–10.1
Fraser Valley	1,609	15,938	–14,329	– 7.9
Kootenays	1,316	15,108	–13,792	– 3.5
Central Interior	17,513	21,825	– 4,312	– 0.3
Northern BC	98,176	16,751	+81,425	+ 3.6
Totals	**129,683**	**123,523**	**+6,160**	**+0.1%**

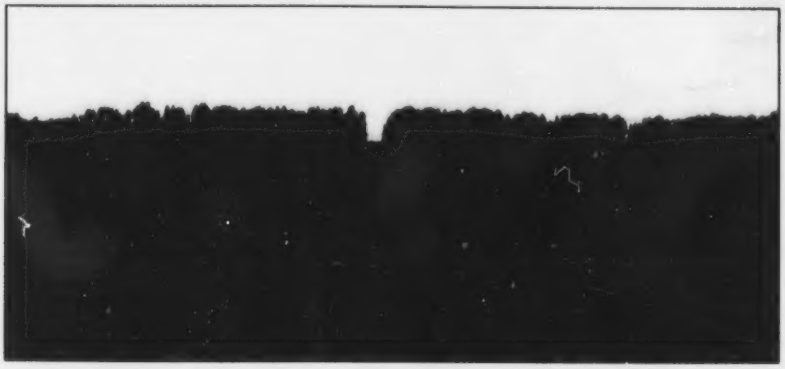
Figure 2: Map of Punchaw Inclusion.



The Fraser Valley, Okanagan–Shuswap and Vancouver Island produce 84% of the total gross farm receipts for the province of BC, while comprising only 11% of the ALR. As shown in Figure 3, 89% of the population growth in the province between 1971 and 1996 occurred in these same regions. These relatively small but critical portions of the ALR are under the most pressure from urban development.

Figure 3: ALR Gross Farm Receipts and Population Growth by Region.





Agricultural Capability

Information on the agricultural capability of land removed and added suggests that the integrity of the ALR has been maintained. As shown in the following table, over 80% of all of the land removed from the ALR was rated entirely, or predominately, as "secondary" land (Classes 4–7 in the Canada Land Inventory classification system for agriculture).

Agricultural capability of land removed from and added to the Agricultural Land Reserve (1974 to March 31, 2000):

Agricultural Capability	Inclusions (Ha)	Exclusions (Ha)	Net Change (Ha)
Prime (all CLI Class 1–3)	5,447	16,279	–10,832
Prime Dominant (mostly CLI Class 1–3)	5,458	5,293	165
Prime Subordinate (mostly CLI Class 4–7)	2,502	9,643	–7,141
Secondary (all CLI Class 4–7)	112,748	91,519	21,229
Unknown	3,528	789	2,739
Totals	**129,683**	**123,523**	**6,160**

More importantly it is estimated that only 1.8% of all of the land rated as prime has been removed from the ALR in over 25 years. This calculation is based on the amount of each agricultural capability class in the ALR contained in the 1978 report of the Select Standing Committee of Agriculture. The estimate also assumes that the mixed and unknown categories have amounts of prime and secondary land in proportion to the known categories.

State of the Forest Land Reserve

The current size, distribution, capability and use of the Forest Land Reserve are important indicators of the current state of the Forest Land Reserve. The following information was created using data from the Forest Land Commission's public records.

Size and Distribution

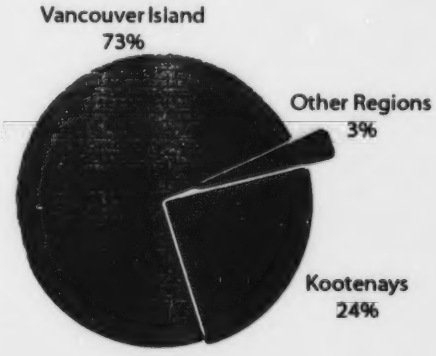
The *Forest Land Reserve Act* makes an important distinction between private and Crown forest land because the Commission has a different role for each category. "Private land" means land other than Crown land as defined in the *Land Act*. "Crown license land" is included in this definition because it is private land to which a tree farm license under the *Forest Act* applies.

Private Forest Land

In 1994, all land classed as private managed forest land under the *Assessment Act* which was not in the Agricultural Land Reserve, and all private land which was part of a tree farm license, was designated as land in the FLR. This initial designation placed 920,000 hectares of private land in the FLR. Approximately 78% of the private lands are classed as private managed forest land; the remaining 22% are part of a tree farm license. Approximately 97% of this private forest land is located in the Vancouver Island and Kootenay regions, as shown in Figure 4.

As of March 31, 2000, the area of private forest land in the FLR equalled 923,800 hectares. Since 1994, 881.5 hectares of private forest land have been removed from the FLR and 1,739.0 hectares have been added, for a net increase of 857.5 hectares.

Figure 4: Percentage of Private Forest Land in FLR by Region as of March 31, 2000.



Note that only about one–half of BC's private forest land was classed as managed forest land in 1993 and designated as land in the FLR.

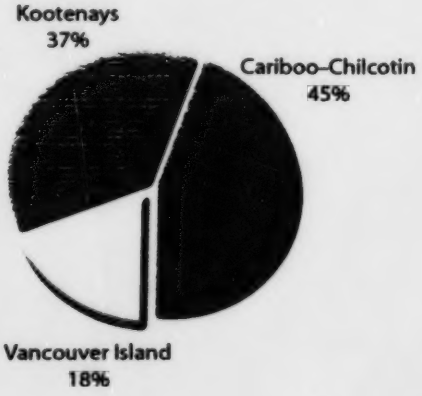
Percentage of FLR Private Forest Land in Vancouver Island and the Kootenays:

Regional District	Private FLR (Ha)		Total	%
	Crown License Land	Managed Forest		
Vancouver Island:				
Cowichan Valley	19,900	159,100	179,000	19.4
Comox–Strathcona	33,700	133,400	167,000	18.1
Nanaimo	25,700	104,700	130,400	14.1
Capital	18,100	54,800	72,900	7.9
Alberni–Clayoquot	57,400	7,500	65,000	7.0
Kootenays:				
East Kootenay	200	118,400	118,600	12.8
Central Kootenay	900	95,500	96,400	10.4
Subtotals	**155,900**	**673,400**	**829,300**	**89.7**
Other: Vancouver Island	—	—	60,000	6.5
Other: Kootenays	—	—	6,700	0.7
Totals	**155,900**	**673,400**	**896,000**	**96.9**

Crown Forest Land

In 1995 the Provincial government designated approximately 15 million hectares of Crown land in Provincial Forests as land in the FLR. These Crown forest lands were in forest use zones that had been identified in regional land use plans for Vancouver Island, the Cariboo–Chilcotin and the Kootenays. Orders–in–Council were used to define these Crown lands. The new FLR designations did not include Crown land in parks, ecological reserves or the Agricultural Land Reserve. It is anticipated that additional Crown forest land will be added to the FLR as land and resource management plans are completed for the other regions of BC.

Figure 5: Percentage of Crown Forest Land by Region as of March 31, 2000.



The Commission does not remove or include Crown lands within the FLR. However, the FLC is consulted on proposed Orders–in–Council to remove Crown lands from the FLR. Since 1994 the Commission has supported the removal of 1,663.5 hectares of Crown land with no conditions and 608 hectares with conditions. The FLC did not support the proposed removal of 563 hectares, and made no comment on the proposed removal of 740 hectares.

Forest Capability

Net changes in the total area of the FLR do not provide useful information on trends because of the relatively large area of both Crown and private forest land. Instead, the quantity and capability of private forest land added and removed from the FLR gives a better assessment of the effectiveness of the program.

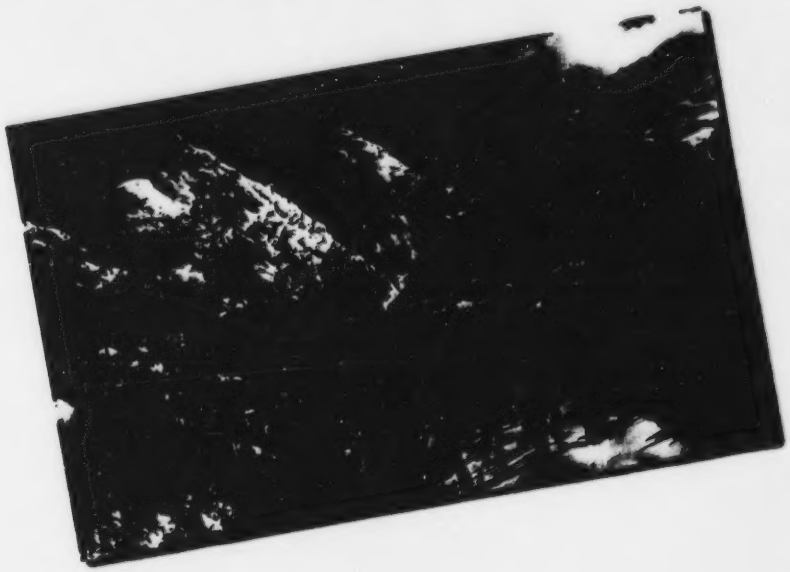
The quality of forest land is expressed as a Site Quality rating. The Site Quality rating reflects an assessment of the productivity of the site for forestry based on the height of the forest stand at 50 years. Site Quality ratings vary by type of forest stand and by region. A Site Quality rating that would be considered very productive in the Okanagan would be considered poor for Vancouver Island.

For Vancouver Island and the Coast generally a Site Quality rating of 35 is considered good. For the Kootenays a Site Quality rating of 25 is considered good.

The average Site Quality rating of the 1,388 hectares of private land included within the FLR since 1994 was 22.8. The average Site Quality of the 564 hectares of private land removed from the FLR since 1994 was 23.7. Therefore the difference in the productive quality of the private forest lands included in, or excluded from, the FLR is negligible.

Private FLR Site Quality Changes 1994–2000:

	Site Quality Ratings					
	Good	Medium	Poor	Low	Non–Prod	Total
Private land removed (ha)	19.4	5.0	0	9.9	0.3	34.6
Private land added (ha)	65.3	63.5	0	0	0	128.8
Total Private FLR Designated (ha)	125,589	349,444	225,440	149,631	68,226	918,330



Data on the capability ratings for proposals to remove Crown forest land from the FLR was incomplete as of March 31, 2000. Therefore aggregated trend information on these removals was not available. Current efforts to clarify the role of the FLR in the Provincial Forest should result in better Crown land information in the future.

Land Use and Ownership

Private timber represents approximately 10% of BC's annual harvest. In 1996 approximately one–half of this volume was estimated to come from land held by non–industrial owners. When this estimate is compared to the current ownership of private land in the FLR, it reinforces the need to encourage more landowners of unmanaged forests to enter the FLR.

Current incentives for owners to have their lands included within the FLR include lower property tax assessment and the protection of the ability to harvest timber under the *Forest Land Reserve Act*.

Private forest land in the FLR is held by over 170 different landowners; however, large forest corporations own most of this land. Fewer than ten corporations own approximately 90% of all private forest land in the FLR. As well, there is a trend towards consolidation of forest corporations, thereby increasing the concentration of ownership of private forest land.

Although current land use information for all private land in the FLR is not available, the extent of corporate ownership and managed forest tax class indicates that almost all of this land is used for forestry. In the future this estimate could be refined by using zoning information and other data from local governments.

Crown forest land in the FLR must be used in accordance with the *Forest Act*; therefore statistics on the use of this Crown land are maintained by the Ministry of Forests.

Business Goals and Results

The 1999–2000 Business Plan for the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission set out business goals for a range of activities including land use planning, application review, enforcement, information management, finance and administration.

The following outlines the most important business goals, intended outcomes and results, as well as case examples to illustrate how the Commissions worked with local governments to achieve these business goals.

1. GOAL:

To actively participate in land use planning to preserve agricultural land and facilitate agricultural economic activity, and to minimize the impact of urban growth and rural settlement on BC's forest land base.

Related Goal:
To coordinate activities with other agencies to maximize the effectiveness of public expenditures.

Related Goal:
To maintain and enhance consultation with the staff of local governments.

The Agricultural Land Commission participated in a wide range of planning exercises, with the objective of encouraging policies and plans that preserve agricultural resources and support the farm use of agricultural land. Section 882 of the *Municipal Act* requires local governments to refer community plans to the Commission prior to adoption. Section 47 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* requires municipal and regional district bylaws to be consistent with the Act.

During 1999–2000 the Forest Land Commission was often consulted on land use plans, although local governments are not required to refer community plans to the Commission. The *Forest Land Reserve Act* prohibits municipalities and regional districts from adopting a bylaw or issuing a permit that would directly or indirectly restrict timber production or harvesting on land in the FLR.

☑ The Agricultural Land Commission received 43 local government plans and bylaws for input and review in 1999–2000. In this same period, 69 resolutions were passed by the ALC respecting local government plans and bylaws, and the FLC commented on 53 land use plans and bylaws.

Planning or Bylaw Description	Number Received	Number of Resolutions
Official Community Plans and Sub–area Plans	17	40
Regional Plans and Strategies, including Regional Growth Strategies	0	2
Transportation Plans, including highways and other facilities	2	7
Local Government boundary adjustments	3	0
Implementing Bylaws, including zoning, subdivision and other bylaws	12	14
Crown Land Use Plans, including Land and Resource Management Plans	0	0
Parks and Recreation Plans	2	3
Utility and Energy Projects, including utility and infrastructure corridors	1	0
Other Land Use Plans, including waste management plans and other studies	6	3
Total	**43**	**69**

☑ During 1999–2000 the Agricultural Land Commission and Forest Land Commission participated in planning with other government bodies to ensure that agriculture and forestry were successfully integrated into their plans and strategies.

Widening the Trans–Canada Highway, Salmon Arm

The Agricultural Land Commission's ongoing participation in planning for major highway routes has always been to ensure that the needs of the agricultural community were accommodated. In 1999–2000 the Commission participated in planning for widening of a stretch of the Trans–Canada Highway about 25 kilometres northwest of Salmon Arm.

The key issue was increasingly dangerous conflicts between through–traffic and some of the heaviest farm traffic movements anywhere on the Trans–Canada Highway in British Columbia. Initial proposals would have resulted in severe restrictions on the operation of several high–value farms. With participation from the farmers, the Commission and the Ministry of Transportation and Highways, the approved project will now separate through–traffic from local agricultural movements. This will make the highway both safer and more efficient for farm operators, tourists, commercial transport and other highway users. Local business and community groups were also involved in an attempt to improve safety for school buses and other local users.

Durrell Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan, Saanich

For the past three years the staff of the Commission have participated in the preparation of an integrated watershed management plan for a small watershed in Saanich. The main focus of the study has been on an area of low lying land within the ALR where problems with flooding have limited the agricultural potential. The plan utilized an integrated approach that balanced agricultural, environmental and recreational interests. Improved drainage will benefit agriculture; environmental interests will benefit from wildlife habitat restoration and fish stream habitat improvement; and recreation interests will benefit from the introduction of trails and viewing areas. The recommendations are now before Saanich Council for consideration and implementation.

New Official Community Plan, Electoral Area F, Nanaimo Regional District

Electoral Area F includes Coombs–Errington and the Alberni Highway area west of Parksville. Until the recent adoption of the Official Community Plan it had been the only area of the Nanaimo Regional District, and one of few in the province, that did not have any land use controls. The Growth Strategy for the District, adopted in 1997, required that all areas within the Regional District have bylaws in place to enable the implementation of the strategy. Partly in recognition of the known reticence of the community to accept land use control, the Regional District embarked upon an extensive public involvement process over a one–year period commencing mid–1998. It was designed to enable the public to play a significant role in preparing the plan.

The Commission played an active role in the process by participating in the agriculture interest roundtable. Commission staff worked closely with the farmers in the area and other agri–team members to develop draft policies that were very supportive of agriculture. In the future it is hoped this process will serve as a model for the development of other community plans.

Chilliwack Agriculture Sector Strategy

Chilliwack's 924 farm operations produce $141 million in gross farm receipts annually. This accounts for 7% of BC's total gross farm receipts (of $1.8 billion) and ranks Chilliwack second among all BC municipalities.

In 1998 the City of Chilliwack, in partnership with the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce, the Chilliwack Downtown Business Association and the Chilliwack Tourism Association created the Chilliwack Economic Partnership Committee. The Committee set to work creating an economic development strategy that was published in May 1998 and entitled *Securing Our Future: A Made In Chilliwack Strategy.*

One of the key elements of the Strategy was the promotion of the City's agricultural industry as an important economic development engine. As per the recommendations of the economic development strategy, in 1999 the Partnership Committee created the Chilliwack Agricultural Commission. The Commission was tasked with preparing a specific "Agricultural Sector Strategy", with the objective "to maintain agriculture as a leading industry within the City of Chilliwack and double the total economic output and value of the agricultural sector within the City of Chilliwack over the next 5–year period".

In May of 1999 the Chilliwack Economic Partnership Committee published the *Agricultural Sector Strategy.* The Strategy encourages the development of agriculture by focusing on the following key initiatives:

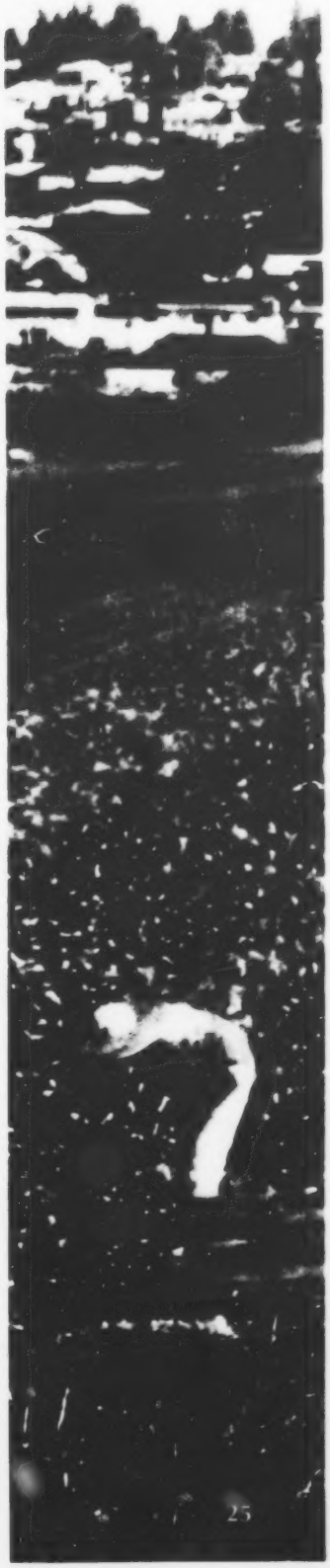
- promote development of the agri–tourism sector;
- promote development of the value–added sector;
- lobby the Federal and Provincial governments with respect to regulatory issues;
- increase awareness of the importance of agriculture;
- increase access to training and trained staff;
- increase access to information on markets and technologies; and
- increase access to financing.

In August of 1999 the Agricultural Land Commission reviewed the Strategy and responded to the Chilliwack Agricultural Commission with praise for the forward thinking that went into the preparation of the Strategy. The ALC also expressed support for the initiatives outlined in the Strategy. The Commission is committed to supporting the implementation of the Agricultural Sector Strategy and to the development of agriculture in this region.

2. GOAL:

To provide efficient, fair and responsive administration of applications.

Related Goal:
To provide adequate public notice and consultation on the adjudication of applications.



The regulation of land use within the Reserves is a responsibility shared between the Commissions and local governments. Both levels are necessary to ensure that Provincial and local land use, agricultural and forestry concerns are addressed.

Applications within the Agricultural Land Reserve

The Agricultural Land Reserve boundary was initially drawn based on the capability of the land, current land use and zoning, input from public hearings and consultation with local governments. The boundary of the ALR and the use of land within it, however, are not static. New information, changing land use requirements and changes within the agricultural industry itself mean that a mechanism must be available for appropriate changes to be made.

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* allows individuals or local governments to apply to the Commission for the inclusion or exclusion of lands within the ALR, the subdivision of land and establishment of non–farm uses within the ALR, and special case uses that require Commission approval. In most cases individuals must submit applications to the local government first; the local government may then use its authority to prevent some applications from proceeding.

The Agricultural Land Commission also administered applications under the *Soil Conservation Act* in 1999–2000.

The Agricultural Land Commission received 488 applications in 1999–2000, a decrease of 96 applications from the previous year. This follows a general trend over the past six years of a decline in the number of applications.

The reduction in the number of applications has resulted from fewer applications for exclusions from the ALR and non–farm uses and subdivisions

within the ALR. This trend reflects the improved accuracy of the ALR boundary, landowners' and local governments' growing recognition of the importance of agricultural land preservation, and changes in Commission policy that allow a greater range of agriculture–related uses without requiring an application.

Applications within the Forest Land Reserve

On July 8, 1994 all private land classified under the *Assessment Act* as managed forest land for the 1993 tax year, and not located in the Agricultural Land Reserve, was designated as land in the Forest Land Reserve. In addition all private land that was part of a tree farm license under the *Forest Act* was also included in the Reserve.

Addition, removal, subdivision and non–forest uses of this private land require the approval of the Forest Land Commission. Applications from landowners to carry out one or more of these actions are made directly to the Commission office. The Commission provides a link between the broad public interests represented by this Provincial land use zone and the interests of local communities. The Commission refers all proposals to add or remove land from the Reserve to affected local governments who, in turn, may hold public hearings on the matter. The Commission may also refer the proposal to First Nations and other affected parties to ensure it receives a thorough, balanced review.

The *Forest Land Reserve Act* requires that when private managed forest land is removed from the Reserve, a portion of the reduction in property taxes received by the landowner over the previous six years is recaptured. This charge equals the difference between the fair market value of the property after its removal and the assessed value of the managed forest land, multiplied by a recapture rate specified by regulation. This recapture rate is currently 6%. The Commission can waive this charge when the use will be for public purposes or for other uses specified in the regulations. In addition, a landowner may request that the Commission reconsider whether this charge is appropriate, and may appeal the property values used in the calculation to the Assessment Appeal Board. The amount of charges assessed and received to date is summarized in the financial section of this report.

☑ The Agricultural Land Commission received 488 applications in 1999–2000. Within this same period the Commission passed 738 resolutions regarding applications. 22% of the resolutions were to refuse applications, based on non-compliance with the legislation and the policies and General Orders of the Commission. Twenty-six resolutions were passed regarding applications that were not of a decision nature or were related to enforcement matters.

Type of ALR Application	Approved	Conditional Approval	Refused	Total
Exclusion requested by a local government	7	3	2	12
Exclusion requested by a landowner	42	18	12	72
Inclusion requested by a local government	4	3	0	7
Inclusion requested by a landowner	21	1	2	24
Subdivision and non-farm use application	162	87	124	373
Minor approvals regarding a subdivision	6	0	1	7
Minor approvals regarding a non-farm use	2	1	0	3
Subdivisions along the ALR boundary	9	2	0	11
Special case uses defined by regulation	62	45	4	111
Public road dedication	9	11	0	20
Modification to existing golf facilities	1	0	0	1
Removal of soil or deposition of fill	1	53	17	71
Totals	**326**	**224**	**162**	**712**

☑ The Agricultural Land Commission improved the average processing time for applications (from receipt to a decision letter) from 108.5 days per application in 1998–1999 to 92.5 days per application in 1999–2000.

Processing times for specific application types varied from an average of 38 days for minor subdivision applications to an average of 120 days for the more complex application types such as a landowner's request for exclusion from the ALR. Applications for subdivision and non–farm use, which comprised approximately 50% of the total applications received by the Agricultural Land Commission in 1999–2000, were processed in an average of 98 days.

☑ Between 1994 and 2000 the FLC received 156 applications from landowners and 161 referrals from Provincial agencies. Nineteen applications were cancelled or withdrawn. Twenty–four of the applications and 25 of the referrals were received in 1999–2000. During this period the Commission passed 43 resolutions regarding applications and referrals.

FLR Applications 1994–2000:

Type of FLR Application	Approved	Cond'l Approval	Refused	Hold/Pending	Total
Additions requested by landowner	30	0	3	0	33
Removals requested by landowner	33	13	14	1	61
Specifically–permitted use applications	13	7	0	2	22
Subdivisions	17	1	2	1	21
Totals	**93**	**21**	**19**	**4**	**137**

FLC Referrals on Crown FLR Removals 1994–2000:

Support	Cond'l Support	Not Supported	Not FLR	No Comment	Hold	Total
78	24	31	9	14	5	161

☑ Both Commissions complied with the provisions of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Forest Land Reserve Act* requiring that a hearing be held, public notice be given or notice provided to the landowner and/or the local government for certain types of applications.

3. GOAL:

To maintain the integrity of the ALR and the FLR.

Related Goal:
To ensure the corporate priorities and program directions are integrated with the implementation of the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act.*

Related Goal:
To coordinate activities with other agencies to maximize the effectiveness of public expenditures.

The Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission worked to maintain the integrity of the ALR and FLR through a variety of means in 1999–2000, including participating in planning processes, reviewing applications, education, regulation and enforcement.

When reviewing applications, the Agricultural Land Commission applied the principle of "net benefit", i.e., the result of any land use, subdivision or boundary change within the ALR should result in a neutral or positive overall impact for agriculture. The net–benefit approach often results in responsiveness to local needs while maintaining the integrity of the ALR. The net–benefit approach does not describe a simple acre–for–acre trade of land, but may consider a number of balances and trade–offs which, in the view of the Commission, result in a fair deal for agriculture.

Working closely with local governments, the public and those involved in the agricultural and forestry sectors results in increased compliance with legislation and the policies and General Orders of the two Commissions. However, the Commissions are still required to undertake a number of compliance and enforcement actions each year.

The enforcement duties of the new Land Reserve Commission will increase under the *Forest Land Reserve Amendment Act*, which assigns the Commission responsibility for administering and enforcing the regulation of forest practices on private land in the FLR and privately managed forest land in the ALR. This new legislation will come into effect on April 1, 2000.

The Commission will measure the performance of landowners through monitoring, public reporting of results and independent auditing to make sure standards of forest practice on private land are met. The new standards will improve protection for fish habitat, water quality, soil conservation, and critical wildlife habitat.

In addition, landowners will continue their commitment to reforestation. The legislation, part of the forest action plan to revitalize the forest sector, will solidify the Provincial government's commitment to the Private Forest Landowners' Association.

☑ Through its review of applications, the Agricultural Land Commission successfully applied the net–benefit policy to maintain the integrity of the ALR and to improve agriculture in 1999–2000.

Stump Lake Ranch, Thompson–Nicola Regional District

The Agricultural Land Commission received an application from a landowner to re–align the boundaries of a ranch involving over 40 separate titles and to subdivide rural lots around Stump Lake. The Commission applied the net–benefit policy in this case to make gains for agriculture.

The Commission negotiated with the landowner to consolidate the ranch property, to improve its capability for agriculture and to prevent it being sold as small, fragmented parcels. As well, a number of conditions were applied such as fencing and the construction of roads, to further protect the agricultural property. In return, the landowner was permitted to subdivide a number of rural lots around Stump Lake.

Kerry Park Recreation Centre, Cowichan Valley Regional District

The Kerry Park Recreational Centre (KPRC) was established in the mid–1970s, outside of the ALR, to serve the recreational needs of the local community. In the early 1990s the KPRC Commission recognized the increased demands on the Centre for parks and recreational opportunities, including a swimming pool, ball fields, gymnasium and fitness centre.

In 1995 a 4.6–hectare piece of ALR land adjacent to the existing Centre was purchased by the Cowichan Valley Regional District for potential expansion of the Centre. Based on the increased demand for recreational facilities in the area and a strategic long–term plan for the expansion of the KPRC, an application was submitted to the Agricultural Land Commission for the non–farm use of the property.

The application included a proposal for a sport–field complex including three softball diamonds, two soccer fields, parking area, concession and restrooms. Bearing in mind the community need for such a facility, the Commission allowed the application subject to appropriate buffering, landscaping, drainage arrangements and fencing being provided to ensure that the development had minimal negative impacts on the adjoining land within the Reserve. As a trade–off for the recreational use of the subject property, the Regional District committed to establish a regional Agricultural Committee comprised of local representatives and staff members of the Commission to explore agricultural issues to benefit the local community.

☑ The Agricultural Land Commission and Forest Land Commission worked closely with local governments and other agencies in 1999–2000 to ensure compliance with the *Agricultural Land Commission Act,* the *Soil Conservation Act* and the *Forest Land Reserve Act.*

Enforcement File #40–O–RICH–98–31978

The owners of an ALR property in the City of Richmond were placing unauthorized fill on the property and using it for unauthorized non–farm uses including an industrial/commercial work and storage yard associated with the owners' trucking business. The fill was generally characterized as excavation material and demolition debris such as broken concrete and asphalt, bricks and electrical wire, etc. The Agricultural Land Commission issued cease and desist and reclamation orders pursuant to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and the *Soil Conservation Act.*

The Commission received a request from the City of Richmond's solicitor asking if the Commission would assist the City in its efforts to stop the unauthorized activities. The Commission advised that it would participate in enforcement including a joint legal action with the City.

An action in the British Columbia Supreme Court (Registry No. A983407) was commenced with the City as plaintiffs against the owners. Through negotiations, the Commission and the City obtained a Consent Order from the owners which was entered by the Court. The Court declared the owners in contravention of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, the *Soil Conservation Act* and the City's Zoning and Development Bylaw. Furthermore, the owners were enjoined from using the property as an industrial/ commercial work and storage yard associated with the owners' trucking business. The owners were also ordered to reclaim the land to an agricultural standard as directed by a Professional Agrologist.

The matter was concluded in 1999–2000 and the land has been reclaimed.

Enforcement File #40–O–95–30537

In 1996 the owner of a site in the Greater Vancouver Regional District was found to be using the property to store demolition debris and had accumulated a substantial pile of material. The Agricultural Land Commission and the Greater Vancouver Regional District commenced a joint legal action in 1997 which resulted in the owner agreeing to a Consent Order which was entered by the British Columbia Supreme Court in 1998. The Order required the owner to remove the stockpiled debris by December 31, 1998.

The owner failed to comply with the Order and the Commission and the Regional District returned to Court with a contempt application. In April 1999 the owner was found in contempt and the Commission and the GVRD were authorized to enter the property and remove the debris at the owner's expense. Since then the Commission and the GVRD have investigated options for removal, contacted various waste disposal facilities and established cost estimates to complete the work.

In an attempt to minimize the costs to the owner, the Commission and the GVRD wrote to the owner in November and gave the owner the opportunity to remove the debris. In a further attempt to facilitate the removal of debris, the Commission and the GVRD set up an account in the owner's name at Ecowaste Industries in Richmond and the Vancouver Landfill in Delta.

In February 2000 the owner began removing the debris. However, little progress was made and only a few loads had been removed as at March 31. The Commission and the GVRD are now considering the hiring of a contractor to complete the removal of debris.

Enforcement File #21–V–99–32538

In 1999 the owner of a property in the Cawston area of the Regional District of Okanagan–Similkameen developed a sawmill and log home manufacturing business in the ALR without the Agricultural Land Commission's approval. The owner subsequently submitted an application pursuant to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* to legalize the unauthorized non–farm uses. The Commission refused the application and ordered the non–farm uses removed. The application was

reconsidered by the Commission on several occasions; each time the Commission reconfirmed its original decision. In September, 1999 Commission staff, at the request of the local Member of the Legislative Assembly, met with the MLA and the owner to discuss the situation. As a result of this discussion, the owner agreed to execute a Consent Order restraining him from using the property for non–farm purposes and post a $25,000 bond in exchange for a two–year period to find a suitable site to relocate the sawmill and log home manufacturing business.

The Consent Order was entered with the British Columbia Supreme Court; at March 31 the owner was in the process of having the bond prepared. The Commission advised the owner that it will not take action to enforce the Order until January 15, 2002 unless the non–farm uses are expanded without its approval.

Southern Crossing Pipeline

The BC Gas Southern Crossing Pipeline project will eventually see the construction of a 316 kilometre pipeline and associated facilities from Yahk in the East Kootenays to Oliver in the South Okanagan. Approximately 110 kilometres of the route are through the ALR and will affect 84 hectares of agricultural land.

The Agricultural Land Commission and BC Gas have entered into an agreement to ensure that high standards for soil reclamation are met, while allowing for flexibility in how these standards are met.

Under the agreement a consulting Soils Agrologist will have responsibility for determining how the soil reclamation standards should be met, such as the application of new technologies. BC Gas has given the consulting Soils Agrologist full authority to suspend work on the project if necessary to resolve any problems with soil reclamation. The Commission will have the final sign–off on whether the soil reclamation standards have been met.

If successful, this agreement may serve as a model for other major soil reclamation projects. Construction on the Southern Crossing Pipeline is scheduled to begin in Spring 2000.

☑ Staff participated with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries in agri–teams, intended to implement the *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act* by assisting local governments in plan and bylaw reviews to ensure that the legislative requirements to support the farm use of agricultural land were met. Agri–teams are a useful tool for maintaining integrity of the ALR.

☑ The Forest Land Commission prepared for the implementation of forest practices on April 1, 2000. Preparation included:

- the drafting of the Private Forest Land Practices Regulation, which will come into effect on April 1, 2000;
- the drafting of policies and procedures;
- the signing of Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Forests, the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, the BC Assessment Authority, and the Private Forest Landowners' Association;
- the designation, hiring and training of enforcement officers;
- the development of ongoing training for government staff, local governments and interested stakeholders.

4. GOAL:

To ensure that legislation and General Orders enable the Commissions to fulfill their mandates.

Related Goal:
To assemble data on performance measures that facilitate program assessment and improve accountability.

Related Goal:
To ensure program directions are relevant, sanctioned, evaluated and accounted for.

☑ The General Order which allowed the non–farm use of lots within the ALR of less than two acres was rescinded, effective June 2, 1999. This action closed a policy loophole that could have allowed non–farm uses to erode the integrity of the ALR.

☒ The review of the standing Oil & Gas Wellsites and Pipelines General Order was not completed during the fiscal year. It is anticipated that this review will be completed in 2000–2001.

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5. GOAL:

To establish effective policy guidelines for decision–making by the Commissions.

Related Goal:
To provide the information necessary for the Commissions to make comprehensive and consistent decisions.

☒ No new policy guidelines were developed in 1999–2000. However, staff initiated research on emerging agri–tourism issues and distributed an agri–tourism and direct farm marketing survey to local governments in March. It is anticipated that a policy or general order on agri–tourism will be developed in 2000–2001.

Upper Columbia Valley ALR Review

Staff initiated a study of the ALR in the northern portion of the Upper Columbia Valley in the Regional District of East Kootenay, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. The results of the study will be used to guide Commission decisions in the study area in order to improve consistency, ensure protection of agricultural resources and promote farming.

The study surveyed information available on the study area to create an agricultural profile and an overview of the issues and conflicts between agriculture and other resource uses. The next phase of the study will include more detailed on–site investigations into agricultural capability. Based on the findings of this study, alternative scenarios will be mapped and presented to the Land Reserve Commission for review. The Commission will carry out a tour of the study area in the summer of 2000 to review the proposed options.

6. GOAL:

To provide equitable public access to accurate, comprehensive information on the current state of the ALR and the FLR.

Related Goal:
To assemble data on performance measures that facilitate program assessment and improve accountability.

Related Goal:
To design and maintain information systems that meet the needs of the public, elected officials and the Commissions.

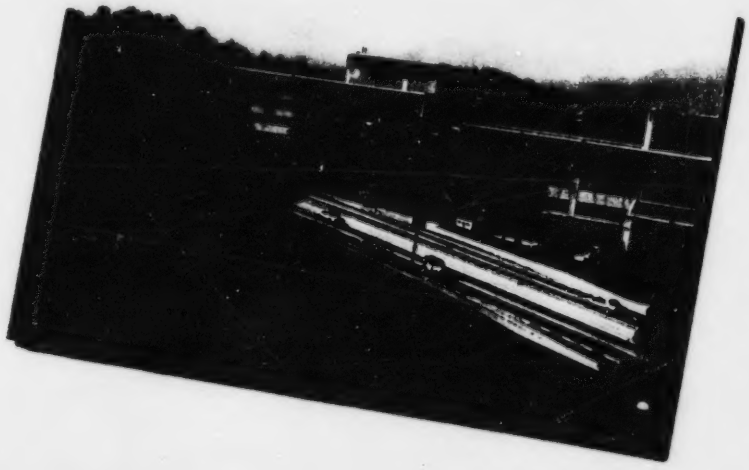
Related Goal:
To maintain accurate records which are secure and accessible.

Related Goal:
To promote better public understanding and acceptance of the role of the Commissions.

Related Goal:
To monitor stakeholder understanding and acceptance of the roles of the Commissions.

- ☑ In addition to an annual report, the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission produced and distributed regular bulletins—*ALR ADVISORY* and *FLR News* —which highlighted developments and issues related to both Reserves. Both Commissions also issued regular media advisories and news releases on significant newsworthy events.

- ☑ The Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission maintained a public website (www.lrc.gov.bc.ca) with information on the work of the Commissions, policy and legislation, and information on the ALR and FLR.



7. GOAL:

To maintain records of the boundaries of the ALR and FLR that can be easily integrated with other data sets and easily interpreted by the public.

Related Goal:
To provide the information necessary for the Commissions to make comprehensive and consistent decisions.

Related Goal:
To maintain electronic databases and graphic resources that are necessary to the daily operations of the Commissions.

Related Goal:
To design and maintain information systems that meet the needs of the public, elected officials and the Commissions.

Related Goal:
To maintain accurate records which are secure and accessible.

☑ Staff responded to all public and local government requests to provide information on the boundaries of the Reserves during 1999–2000.

☑ The two Commissions worked with local governments, government agencies and holders of data such as the Private Forest Landowners' Association in 1999–2000 to improve ALR and FLR data.

ALR Digitizing Project Begins to Pay Dividends: Regional District of Central Kootenay and Commission Share Digital Data

The Agricultural Land Commission, working with the Regional District of Central Kootenay and Crown Land Registry Services, finalized the compilation of ALR digital boundaries to be used by each agency's geographic information system (GIS).

The Crown Land Registry Service and the Regional District of Central Kootenay worked together to match the boundaries of Crown lands as shown by the Provincial database with the detailed private property boundaries shown by the Regional District's database. The Commission recognized this opportunity to more accurately define the ALR boundary. Working with the Regional District, the ALR boundary was retro–fitted to this new legal base information.

In the future, quarterly ALR boundary amendments will be provided to the Regional District as digital GIS files. This will save the Regional District data capture time and ensure that the Regional District's data on the location of the ALR boundary is consistent with that of the Commission.

8. GOAL:

To assemble data on performance measures that facilitate program assessment and improve accountability.

Related Goal:
To provide the information necessary for the Commissions to make comprehensive and consistent decisions.

Related Goal:
To ensure program directions are relevant, sanctioned, evaluated and accounted for.

☒ Comprehensive performance measures were not complete by March 31, 2000. It is anticipated that draft performance measures will be in place in April 2000.

9. GOAL:

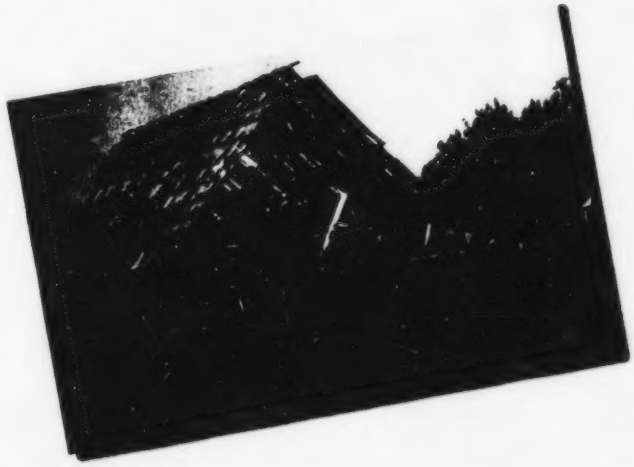
To maximize the efficient use of financial and human resources.

Related Goal:
To coordinate activities with other agencies to maximize the effectiveness of public expenditures.

Related Goal:
To comply with government financial and administrative procedures.

☑ The Commissions carried out all activities within the existing budget and staff allocation.

☑ The Commissions complied with government policies and procedures for matters such as financial reporting and issuing public contracts.



Farms and Forests for the Future: Renewing Our Strategic Directions

Many stakeholders, different levels of government and a variety of individuals play a role in ensuring that resources remain available for food and timber production, while maintaining other resource values and opportunities. The challenge facing the Commissions, the public and those working in the resource sector is to ensure the long–term security of our agricultural and forestry resource lands and to preserve the right to farm and the right to harvest in the Reserves in the face of competing public priorities.

In response to this challenge, the Agricultural Land Commission began a process of developing a new Strategic Plan in 1998. During the 1999–2000 fiscal year, both the Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission consulted with stakeholders and others to help identify new strategic directions for the Land Reserve Commission.

Throughout the Fall staff met with agricultural and forestry organizations to hear their views on the work of the Commissions and priorities for the next five years. In addition to these recent consultations, in 1998–1999 the Agricultural Land Commission held workshops on its strategic direction and commissioned six research papers examining future trends in agriculture; urban development and rural settlement; and the resulting competition for scarce resources at the global level.

The consultations and research identified many issues affecting the preservation of land and water resources in BC. They also helped to clarify the objectives of wise stewardship and the maintenance of economic opportunity in our resource areas. We heard strong support for a continuing Provincial role in preserving the land base for agriculture and forestry. We also heard many positive suggestions on how the Land Reserve Commission could improve its service delivery.

Using this information a draft strategic plan was prepared for the Land Reserve Commission and distributed in February of 2000 to the many communities of interest, including all local governments with Reserve lands.

The draft strategic plan, *Farms and Forest for the Future,* clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the LRC and identifies priority areas for its work where change can be most effective. The plan identifies three main areas of responsibility for the new Commission:

- Preserving the land base: *The Land Reserve Commission will protect the land base for agriculture and forestry through the Agricultural and Forest Land Reserves.*
- Supporting working farms and forests: *The Commission will act as an advocate for agriculture and forestry in partnership with local governments, Provincial ministries and agencies, First Nations and others.*
- Keeping resource options open: *The Commission will collaborate with many communities of interest to maintain options for the wise use of our land resources to ensure food, fibre and fuel production into the future.*

Within the three areas of responsibility, the Commission identified three primary objectives: *Resource Protection, Resource Utilization* and *Resource Security.* The draft strategic plan proposes that the new Commission meet these objectives by committing to the following strategic directions:

Strategic Directions for Resource Protection:

- Protect the integrity of the agricultural and working forest land base.
- Strengthen and enhance the Provincial Land Reserve system by increasing operational responsiveness and accountability.
- Implement operational changes to reflect the existing and changed roles and responsibilities of the Land Reserve Commission.

Strategic Directions for Resource Utilization:

- Work with communities of interest to create an environment in which working farms and working forests can succeed, complementary to other resource users.
- Act as an advocate for farmers and forest operators with local governments and other communities of interest.
- Increase understanding of, and support for, the needs of working farms and working forests on Reserve lands.

Strategic Directions for Resource Security:

- Promote the long–term management of land and water resources needed for sustainable agriculture and forestry for future generations.
- Encourage diversification (including agro–forestry opportunities) and value–added activities within the farm and forestry sectors.
- Work with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and others to encourage the protection and utilization of resource lands by First Nations.

For each draft strategic direction, a number of action steps were proposed. These were outlined in the full report.

BC is an innovator in resource planning and can continue to show leadership where competition for scarce resources demands reasoned and fair decision–making. The Commissions remain committed to fulfilling their mandates on behalf of all British Columbians and to maintaining a high standard of accountability. The new Commission anticipates finalizing the Strategic Plan in early Spring 2000.

Financial Report

Financial Report of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission and Forest Land Commission for the year ending on March 31, 2000.

Statement of Revenue

Income received and credited to the consolidated fund of BC:

Description	1999–2000	1998–1999
Application Fees *(Agricultural Land Commission Act* and *Soil Conservation Act)*	$142,500	$178,689
Application Fees *(Forest Land Reserve Act)*	9,800	11,250
Totals	**$152,300**	**$189,939**

Statement of Expenditure

The approved budgets for both the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the Forest Land Commission (FLC) are combined in one legislative vote each year to make their administration more efficient. The Land Commission Office (LCO) response code is for the secretariat that supports both Commissions.

Category	LCO	ALC	FLC	Total
Salaries	$1,273,672	$0	$0	$1,273,672
Allowances	4,933	0	0	4,933
Employee Benefits	290,995	0	0	290,995
Commissioners	0	186,403	38,043	224,446
Travel Expenses	89,046	0	0	89,046
Professional Services	0	230,598	37,036	267,634
Information Systems	104,372	0	0	104,372
Office Expenses	83,658	0	0	83,658
Public Information	0	13,602	2,849	16,451
Building Occupancy	226,948	0	0	226,948
Asset Acquisitions	7,660	0	0	7,660
Grants	0	23,400	0	23,400
Recoveries	0	–720	0	–720
Total	**$2,081,284**	**$453,283**	**$77,928**	**$2,612,495**

Notes on the financial report of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission and the Forest Land Commission for the year ending on March 31, 2000.

1. Recapture Charges

Section 21 of the *Forest Land Reserve Act* requires that a charge be assessed when the Commission approves the removal of private land from the FLR. This charge equals the difference between the fair market value of the property after its removal and the assessed value of the managed forest land, multiplied by a recapture rate specified by regulation. This recapture rate is currently 6%.

Recapture Charges Paid 1994–March 31, 2000	$462,640
Charges Pending as of March 31, 2000*	74,903
TOTAL	**$537,543**

* Pending charges relate to applications that may or may not result in the removal of lands from the FLR. If the lands are removed, the recapture charge will apply.

2. Performance Bonds and Securities

The Commissions hold Letters of Credit and other financial securities to ensure that land is adequately reclaimed and the conditions attached to an approval are fulfilled.

Soil Conservation Act applications	$4,189,500
Golf course applications	284,500
Exclusions from ALR	448,420
Non–Farm use in ALR	386,000
Special case uses	15,000
Other planning applications	20,000
FLR applications	99,000
TOTAL	**$5,442,420**

3. Conditional Grants

A total of $14,400 was paid to local governments to reimburse them for their portion of application fees for applications which were received directly by the Agricultural Land Commission.

Appendix

Plans and Bylaws Reviewed, April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000 (by Regional District):

Regional District	Plan/Bylaw
Alberni–Clayoquot	Beaver Creek OCP
Capital	Capital Regional District Parks Master Plan View Royal OCP Gabriola Island Zoning Bylaw
Cariboo	City of Quesnel OCP 100 Mile House OCP 100 Mile House Zoning Bylaw Chilcotin Area Rural Land Use Bylaw #3500/1999
Central Okanagan	Lake Country Woodsdale Neighbourhood Plan Central Okanagan Zoning Bylaw
Columbia Shuswap	Ranchero–Deep Creek Rural Land Use Bylaw 2700
Comox–Strathcona	Greenways Plan Electoral Area C Rural Comox Valley OCP Greenways Plan Electoral Areas B Rural Comox Valley OCP Comox Valley Electoral Area – Area A OCP
Cowichan Valley	Mill Bay Malahat Zoning Bylaw – Electoral Area A
East Kootenay	Invermere OCP
Fraser Valley	Abbotsford Mushroom Compost Farm Bylaw
Greater Vancouver	Northern Coquitlam OCP Pitt Meadows Airport Plan South Coast Transportation System Plan Pitt Meadows OCP
Nanaimo	Coombs–Errington, Electoral Area F OCP
North Okanagan	City of Vernon Highlands Neighbourhood Plan
Okanagan–Similkameen	Trans–Canada Trail – Thompson–Okanagan
Powell River	Lasqueti Island Rural Land Use Bylaw
Squamish–Lillooet	Electoral Area D OCP Pemberton Fringe Area OCP
Sunshine Coast	West Sechelt Neighbourhood OCP
Thompson–Nicola	Regional Growth Strategy Highway 5A, Aspen Grove to Brake Check Trans–Canada Highway – Cache Creek to Alberta Border